

Questions and Answers

Customer Relationship Management Program Support Request for Proposal (VA118-15-R-0025)

Please be advised that any information contained herein is for informational purposes only, is offered in response to specific questions posed by prospective Offerors, and is subject to change throughout the question and answer process. Accordingly, in the event that there is any discrepancy between the information contained within this document, any previous and/or subsequent Question and Answer document(s), and/or the Solicitation, Offerors are hereby advised that the terms and conditions contained within the final Solicitation control. If indicated in the Questions and Answers provided below, updated information will be incorporated into the Request for Proposal (RFP) by an amendment to the RFP.

1. Will this solicitation be sole-source or open to all SDVOSBs?

Solicitation will be set-aside to all SDVOSBs under the Federal Business Opportunities (FBO) website. The other than full and open competition authority refers to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) portion.

2. Section 4.2 of the subject solicitation says "Tasks under this PWS shall be performed in VA facilities located in 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420. Work may be performed at remote locations with prior approval of the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR)." Would it be possible to perform the majority of the work at the contractor's location?

No. A majority of this work shall be performed at the Government's location.

3. Who is the incumbent contractor for this work? If so, will this effort be awarded back to them?

The current incumbent is DekaTron. This is a competitive acquisition, and all proposals shall be evaluated.

4. The draft solicitation requires the following: "Offeror shall provide a staffing chart including labor categories and associated hours addressing all requirements in Section 5.0 through Section 5.8.4 of the PWS." Should this be "Section 5.1 through Section 5.7" since there is no Section 5.8.4 and Section 5.0 encompasses all tasks?

This should read as "Offeror shall provide a staffing chart including labor categories and associated hours addressing all requirements in Section 5.1 through Section 5.7.3 of the PWS."

5. Is it sufficient to provide labor categories and hours at the 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, etc level or does the Government require a more granular staffing chart (at the 5.2.3 level for example)?

Yes. It is sufficient to only provide labor categories and hours at the 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, etc. level.

6. Has any company current done this or similar work for VA, including the establishment of the existing CRM systems and processes? If so, can these previous vendors/contractors be identified? Will any of these vendors/contracts continue working on the same or similar systems and need to be worked closely with for a successful execution of the deliverables listed?

The following three companies have provided these services in the past: DekaTron, Federal Consulting Group, and MSquared.

No. The transition should be coordinated between the incoming and outgoing Contractors.

7. Has VA completed a gap analysis for their CRM systems? If so, can the gap analysis be shared or at least the summary/table of contents be shared, so that potential bidders can understand the breadth and depth of the analysis and identify any additional issues which may need to be explored upon contract award? If a gap analysis was done, who completed it?

No gap analysis has been performed.

8. Can samples/redacted deliverables be shared with the solicitation, or more details be provided in regards to the various deliverables and reports? For example, the contractor will need to update the Business Relationship Guidebook, and needs to predict the payable time to allocate to this task, but a potential bidder does not know the size or state of the existing BRM to appropriately allocate for staff time.

Yes. A similar document can be provided. The Quarterly Performance Review Guidebook can be made available.

9. As for travel, the draft solicitation states that the contractor will need to go to 12 different locations for 2-3 days. What is the predicted frequency of these visits (annually, every six months)? How does VA plan to allow for additional site visits if the contractor finds these sites in need of additional visits or days during an annual visit?

The projected frequency travel is one trip per month. No additional travel is projected at this time.

10. Understanding that VA will need one or more staff onsite from the contractor and VA will provide space and equipment for these staff to work out of VA offices, would VA consider a combination of full time staff and Subject Matter Experts who telecommute as an acceptable response method? In particular, this is being asked so that a SDVOSB can leverage additional expertise and reduce costs, providing VA with the best possible return and results on its funding investment.

Tasks under this acquisition shall be performed in VA facilities located in 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420.

11. Currently, the winning contractor will be required to submit staff names within 3 days of notification of award for appropriate background checks to be run by VA. We hold that this severely disadvantages an SDVOSB bidder, and suggest this requirement be changed to 30 days, so that sufficient Service Disabled Veterans can be screened for the positions and recruited. This furthermore will ensure as many Service Disabled Veterans be recruited for this contract's work, and not merely the required 51% of personnel.

Section 6.2.2 of the PWS has been revised as follows: "Within 10 business days after award, the Contractor shall provide a roster of Contractor and Subcontractor employees to the COR to begin their background investigations."

12. Can the questions and comments submitted in response to this draft solicitation and the companies who submitted questions/comments be published after the closing date of 11/7?

Yes. Questions and comments can be publicized (contracting recommendation on companies). Questions and Answers will submitted along with the formal solicitation release.

13. Please confirm this opportunity is a re-compete of VA118-11-P-0086.

Yes. This is a re-compete of VA118-11-P-0086.

14. How many Full-time equivalents (FTEs) are currently performing this work? Does the Government expect to need the same level of support for this follow-on contract?

There are currently 15 FTEs performing this work. The Government expects the successful Contractor to staff accordingly to the requirements in the PWS.

15. Section 4.3 states that there will be approximately 12 trips associated with this contract, but only lists 7 locations. In order to include accurate travel costs for the proposed firm-fixed-price (FFP) line items as instructed, Offerors will need the following information:

- a. The number of trips to each location
- b. The number of personnel required for each trip
- c. The time of year for each trip (per diem rates change based on the time of year for many locations)

The successful Offeror can assume no more than 12 trips. Below is an estimate, though this is subject to minor changes. The successful Offeror can assume no trip shall be longer than longer than three days, no trip shall include more than two people, or no site visited more than three times.

Round Trip Location	Number of Trips	Number of Persons	Number of Days
Atlanta, GA	2	2	3
Vancouver, WA	3	2	3
Austin, TX	3	2	3
Sacramento, CA	1	2	3
Philadelphia, PA	1	2	2
Little Rock, AR	1	2	3
Durham, NC	1	2	2

16. We understand specific travel details may not be known at this time. Given this, would the Government consider including a Not-to-Exceed (NTE) travel limit in lieu of separate FFP line items for travel?

Yes, the Government would consider a Not-to-Exceed travel limit.

17. There appears to be a discrepancy regarding Government-furnished equipment. Section 5.2.3 of the PWS states "The Contractor shall provide any software licenses and equipment necessary to support the activities for IT content development." However, Section 6.6 of the PWS states "The Government shall provide all hardware and software to support all aspects of this contract to include, VA security-conditioned laptop computers, cables, power supplies, software and software licenses necessary to support the tasks outlined in this Performance Work Statement." Please clarify.

The intent of Section 6.6 is to describe that VA will provide all Government-owned software licenses and peripherals for access to VA systems. VA will provide the software and hardware to access the secure VA network. However, the Contractor shall continue to provide any software licenses and equipment necessary to support the activities for IT content development.

18. Will the Government provide a studio, editing suite, and/or other equipment to support Task 5.2.3 Content Development, specifically for the seven IT Customer Videos?

No. The Government will not provide any editing tools or equipment for this contract.

19. What are the current labor categories and associated hours supporting this requirement?

The current contract is not representative of the requirement set forth in this solicitation. The current solicitation expands upon the scope of work that is currently being performed; therefore, the current labor categories and hours expended under the current contract are not applicable to this solicitation and would not be a true measure of the anticipated level of effort or skills sets required.

20. Is there an existing Project Management Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.1.1)

No since the old one will not be reflective of the new PWS

21. Request example of existing Monthly Progress Report (As referenced in PWS Section 5.1.2)

See answer 21. Current MPR will not accurately reflect proposed work.

22. Is there an existing CRM IT Customer Strategy Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.1)

No. There is no existing CRM IT Customer Strategy Plan.

23. Is there an existing CRM Audience Inventory Report? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.2)

No. There is no existing CRM Audience Inventory Report.

24. Is there an existing CRM Communications Development Handbook? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.3)

No. There is no existing CRM Communications Development Handbook.

25. Are there any existing IT Customer Videos?

Yes. They can be found on VA's YouTube channel. Below is a link to one.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X1r04zrArpw>

26. Is there an existing CRM Communications Channel Directory? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.4)

No. There is no existing CRM Communications Channel Directory.

27. Is there an archive of previous Quarterly Communications Effectiveness Reports? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.5)

No. There is no archive of Quarterly Communications Effectiveness Reports.

28. Is there a Communication Measurement Summary from the previous year? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.2.5)

No. There is no Communications Measurement Summary from the previous year.

29. Is there an existing BIDS-P Project Management Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.3)

No. There is no existing BIDS-P Project Management Plan.

30. Is there an existing Release Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.3.1)

Yes. There is an IT Performance Dashboard Release plan. Yes. Access can be provided.

31. Is there an existing BIDS-P Communication Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.3.2)

No. There is no existing BIDS-P Communication Plan.

32. Is there an existing BIDS-P Marketing Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.3.3)

No. There is no existing BIDS-P Marketing Plan.

33. Is there an existing IT Performance Dashboard Training Plan? If so, can we get access to it? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.3.4)

No. There is no existing IT Performance Dashboard Training Plan.

34. Is there an existing Service Level Agreement Guidebook? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.6.3)

No. There no existing Service Level Agreement Guidebook.

35. Is there an existing Annual Survey Project Plan? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.7.1)

Yes. There is an existing Annual Survey Project Plan. It can be provided.

36. Is there an existing Continuous Customer Satisfaction Survey Project Plan? (As referenced in PWS Section 5.7.2)

No. There is no existing Continuous Customer Satisfaction Survey Project Plan.

38. Will the Government allow the information required on page 140, Section 1- Contract Descriptions to be provided in a table format?

Yes. The Government will allow the information required on page 140, Section 1 – Contract Descriptions to be provided in a table format.

39. The Draft Solicitation, page 141 states “The Offeror shall also provide other than cost and pricing data to substantiate their price.” Please clarify what the Government requires in this section.

Offerors no longer have to provide other than cost and pricing data to substantiate their price. Statement has been removed from Section E.14, Proposal Submissions, Volume III – Price Factor of the solicitation.

40. The PWS indicates that the ACSI methodology has been adopted by VA for measuring customer satisfaction in relation to this scope of work. The pre-solicitation notice indicates that the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) methodology is a **proprietary** methodology which is licensed and owned by American Customer Satisfaction Index, LLC. We understand that CFI group is indeed the only organization licensed to use the ACSI methodology with the Federal Government. Given the inclusion of ACSI capabilities throughout the requirements of the PWS as well as in the draft Evaluation Criteria, would the Government consider an arrangement to eliminate ACSI from the evaluation of the bids and to direct the winning vendor to partner with the CFI group? This would avoid unreasonably limiting competition and increasing prices on this procurement.

It is not the Government’s intent to limit competition; however, because of the criticality of the ACSI requirement it cannot be struck.

The Government understands the CFI Group sub-licenses this methodology and there are several vendors which can provide the service.

41. How many workstations are available at the client location for contractors performing on this contract?

There are sufficient workstations available.

42. Does the Government foresee organization conflicts of interest (OCIs) for vendors currently performing work on VA programs (e.g. T4)?

No. Not at this time.

43. Given the timeline of the effort and the expiration of the incumbent contract, will the incumbent be extended to serve past December 2014?

No. Current period of performance ends December 28, 2014.

44. Lastly, if there are continued delays, will VA consider using the soon-to-be-awarded VA ADVISOR IDIQ as the scope fits very nicely?

No. There are no plans of utilizing another contract vehicle at this time.

45. Page 69, Section 1.0 Background – The Government states that “VA has chosen ACSI as a model to gauge VA customer satisfaction”. We understand there is only one company which is licensed to provide ACSI solution. Is it the intent of the Government to limit competition to a licensed ACSI provider, or can a company capable of applying the ACSI Methodology respond to this solicitation?

It is not the Government’s intent to limit competition. The Government understands the CFI Group sub-licenses this methodology and there are several vendors which can provide the service. Any companies that can provide the ACSI methodology can respond to this solicitation.

46. Page 71, Section 4.2 PLACE OF PERFORMANCE - The Government states that “Tasks under this PWS shall be performed in VA facilities located in 810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20420. Work may be performed at remote locations with prior approval of the Contracting Officer’s Representative (COR)” How many seats will the Government provide for onsite staff?

Sufficient work stations will be made available for contract staff.

47. Page 71, Section 4.3 TRAVEL – The Government states they expect 12 trips for 2-3 duration each. How many contractor staff does the Government estimate will be required to travel for each trip?

Based on previous travel, it is not anticipated that more than two contracting staff shall be required per trip. This is the historical trend that VA has observed.

48. Page 73 and Page 9; 5.1.1 Contractor Project Management Plan: The Government requires monthly updates to the Project Management Plan. What sections of the Project Management Plan will require update after the first month?

The Government requires the Contractor Project Management Plan be updated in its entirety.

49. Page 74, 5.2.1 Strategic Objectives: This section states that the Contractor shall develop a CRM IT Customer Strategy Plan with Government input. Will stakeholders outside of CRM IT be expected to provide input to the strategic objectives? If so, who and how many groups?

Yes, Government input will be required, though the number and identities of stakeholders will be uncovered during the Strategy development process.

50. Page 74, 5.2.3 Content Development;

a. Is there an existing style/brand guide?

The contractor will have current VA Office of Information and Technology (OI&T) branding and VA Public Affairs branding information as guidelines.

b. For the seven videos, will the contractor be expected to provide the talent? For budgeting purposes, is there a projected length for each video?

On camera speaking / (talent) will be the responsibility of the contractor, though VA will provide VA subject matter experts as required. All videography, editing, and B-roll shall be provided by the contractor. Each video will be between 2-3 minutes in length.

c. Are we expected to host any websites? What platform will the web pages need to be developed in?

No, the contractor is not expected to host any websites. Web pages will be developed in current VA platforms.

51. Page 74 Section 5.2.3 CONTENT DEVELOPMENT - The Contractor shall provide any software licenses and equipment necessary to support the activities for IT content development. How many users does the Government expect will require software licenses? Does this include the ACSI tool license as well?

**The Government will make this decision on a case by case basis.
Yes. The ACSI license applies to this as well.**

52. Page 75, 5.2.4 Channel Management; The Contractor shall develop a CRM Communications Channel Directory to assess current strategic communications channels. Is there any current documentation of communication channels used to address the 350,000 enterprise-wide, internal customers referenced in this section?

No. CRM does not currently have any documentation of current strategic communications channels.

53. Page 77, 5.3.4 TRAINING AND SUPPORT – The Government states that “The Contractor shall develop, deliver, maintain, and execute an IT Performance Dashboard Training Plan” How many Government staff will require training by the contractor and in what format does the Government want the training to be delivered (in-person, web-based, conference call or live-meeting)?

The Government does not expect the demand to exceed 100 VA staff per quarter. Training will be provided via conference call and live-meeting utilizing VA provided tools.

54. Page 80, 5.5.1 BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (BRM) SENIOR LEVEL – The Government states that “The Contractor shall provide a Recurring BRM Meeting Package which includes the support of agenda development and distribution, speaker coordination, slide collection and preparation, managing invitations, action log, addressing day-to-day BRM inquiries, and maintaining BRM SharePoint Document Repository. The Contractor shall only perform these tasks as a back-up function when the responsible federal employee is unavailable to complete them.” How often is the recurring meeting and how often does the Government expect that the back up support will be required?

The BRM occurs twice a month. As background knowledge, during FY14 the contractor provided back up support on four occasions.

55. Will the resultant awardee be exposed to PHI/PII/SPI? If yes, please provide an estimate to the amount of individual Veteran or Employee records the vendor will have access to. Is access anticipated to be only via VA’s systems?

No. Exposure to PHI/PII/SPI is not anticipated.

56. How important is benchmarking VA’s performance against other groups within VA as well as IRS, USPS, and 11 other large federal agencies?

Benchmarking is important and VA is benchmarking its performance against similarly situated organizations in the private sector and comparing against other federal agencies.

57. What is the object of satisfaction? Is it overall perception of OI&T’s effectiveness or is it measuring effectiveness of specific types of interactions? Effectiveness of ticket resolution? Live call center interactions?

The object of satisfaction is for IT products and services based on three components: overall satisfaction; satisfaction in comparison to their expectation; and, what is their satisfaction in comparison to the ideal. It is the overall perception of OI&T’s effectiveness, and it is measuring specific types of services and specific types of interactions.

58. Page 82, Section 5.6 of the PWS states that the purpose of VA Service Level Management is to define and document acceptable levels of service on behalf of mission owners. How are these service levels provided? Web chat support, call center, ticket tracking system, and support via email?

Service levels are provided in the initial Business Requirements Document IT programs must provide upon creation. Service Levels are provided by VA OI&T Service, Delivery, and Engineering (SDE).

59. Page 83, Section 5.6.1 of the PWS, what communication channels are being measured? Do specific target audiences only interact via specific channels?

Currently no communications channels are being measured.

60. Page 85, Section 5.7 of the PWS:

- a. In 2014 how many total surveys were sent? 12 total? An annual survey each quarter and two follow up surveys per quarter. Was the audience the same for every survey? Was the survey the same each time?

The Annual Survey instrument was used for four quarterly surveys with different populations. No, the audience was not the same for each survey. No, the survey was not the same each time. The same instrument was used for the continuous customer satisfaction surveys which is a daily survey of 3,000 randomly selected VA employees.

- b. Is there a preferred method of survey administration? (email, web, etc.)

Yes, Communication is through email and the survey is web-based.

- c. Are certain audience types engaged through different channels (email, web, IVR, etc.) or are all audiences engaged the same way.

All audiences are engaged in the same way and the survey is 508 compliant.

61. Page 86, Section 5.7.1 of the PWS:

- a. Response frequency with National Service Desk (NSD). Is this the number of email surveys and their response rates or is this a measure through a service desk (call center support, email support, live chat)?

It is the Response frequency with NSD related questions in the survey.

- b. Tele-work – Is this a segment of survey responses that identified that they telework?

Yes.

- c. What do you mean by non-modeled areas? Examples?

Modeling is used for calculating the impact of various IT components on overall customer satisfaction. Non-modeled areas are the areas that were not included in the calculation. For example, the National Service Desk is non-modeled and Product Delivery is non-modeled.

62. Page 87, Section 5.7.2 of the PWS:

- a. How is the sample population that is going to be surveyed determined? Is the service deployed to them via email?

It is not a sample survey. It is a population survey. Survey is deployed to them via email.

- b. What is the online survey portal?

The online survey portal is a proprietary portal used by CRM